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THE

MADRAS REVIEW

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COMMENTS

Lord Willingdon is a weak but amiable satrap who tries to make up by his social affability what he lacks in political capacity. He is a great believer in the political value of Government dinners. At no other time have we heard of so much lunch parties in Government House as one hears there now-a-days. His Lordship's love of extravagance is well-known. We may quote, as an instance, his fantastic proposal to remodel the Governor's residence at Guindy at a cost of Rs. 25 lakhs, a proposal which was knocked on the head by the Secretary of State. The mischievous and ill-advised proposal of his Government to appoint four members to the Executive Council and three Ministers is a typical instance of Lord Willingdon's love of extravagance. When there is hardly sufficient work for four men, it is a criminal waste of public money to appoint double that number. There is not enough money for education, for sanitation, and for developing industries. The subordinate and clerical services are grossly underpaid. We are asked to behold the spectacle of the progressive realization of responsible Government which is nothing more than the multiplication of a number of highly paid offices which have been distributed to the toadies and flunkeys who dance attendance at the Government House.

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So much for Lord Willingdon's extravagance. Coming to the way in which he has formed the new Ministry, we must say that His Lordship has been betrayed into an unfortunate error which he will very soon regret. Our readers must have known that we are not one of those who wish to keep alive the bitter feeling between the Brahman and the non-Brahman. We attach very little value to the working of the Reform Act because we have been firmly convinced that it is an Act which in its application will bring more jobbery and corruption and intrigue in the country than any comparative benefit which it may confer on the people. But this does not mean that we must assume an attitude of passive indifference to anything which the Government does. It has been a known fact that the best men of England do not come to India as Governors and Viceroys for fear of losing their political positions in England. And when we remember that Lord Willingdon has spent seven years in Bombay and is come here for another period we may assume that his talents are not in requisition in his own country. After reading His Lordship's extraordinary reasons for inviting the leader of the Non-Brahmana party to form the Ministry, we have no hesitation in saying that His Lordship is either a second rate politician or a timid man. Among the candidates who have been returned to the Madras Legislative Council, there are a large number of Non-Brahmans who belong to the Liberal League, the National Home Rule League and the Nationalist party and it is a surprise to us that they are taken to be followers of Sir P. Theogaraya Chetty. We repeat that our objection is not that the Ministers are Non-Brahmans but that they are hopeless reactionaries. Lord Willingdon, if we remember right, at the outset of his office declared himself against communal reservation and was abused by the Non-Brahmans for holding that view. How soon His Lordship has changed his view is one of great mystery to us. A Governor of a Province must, as far as possible, attempt to unify the people and, in order to do this, call a Conference of the elected members and find out a *via media*. As it is, His Lordship will find that his administration in future will not be smooth sailing.

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As we have stated above, we base our protest not because that the chosen Ministers are Non-Brahmans or mediocres. In England, generally it is the mediocres that become Ministers. But our protest is against the facile assumption of Lord Willingdon that the reactionary party has the majority in the new Council. And let His Lordship understand that for

the successful working of the new Government, it is not enough merely to rely on Sir Theogaraya. We predict for the new Ministry a very short life. And then will come the realization. In inaugurating the new Reform Act, His Lordship has been criminally neglectful of the tax-payer's interest, has shown a lack of the fundamental knowledge of democratic constitutions, and has played into the hands of a reactionary party.

* * *

The tragedy at the Buckingham Mills and the manner in which that tragedy has been condoned by the local Government is another instance of Lord Willingdon's inability to understand popular feeling. Our readers would have perused the details of this tragedy in the papers, which resulted in the death of two young boys and injured over 15 people. If the men threw stones at the Police should they not be warned before they were fired at? Were any shots fired in the air at all? Why did the Police interfere in a dispute between an Employer and his Employees when there was no evident attempt to cause a breach of the peace? The official version is grossly one-sided. We are willing to place more reliance on the words of those who were at the scene of the occurrence? When will the Govrrnment learn that it cannot allow every Tom and Harry to shoot down people for any fancied danger to tne public peace? Our regret is that the local Government condoned the action of the Police before an impartial Non-Official Committee examined and reported on this incident. We offer our sincere condolences to the families of those bereaved lads who lost their lives in this tragedy. We hope that the Government will not delay the appointment of a Committee composed of Non-Official Indians as demanded by a monster public meeting which was held in Madras on Wednesday.

* * *

That Association of title-holders and title-hunters called the National Liberal Federation, a handmaid to the Scuth Indian Liberal Federation, will meet in Madras in December. A grandiloguent circular has been issued enumerating the services of the Liberal party in the past and what it proposes to achieve in the future. Among the many resolutions that will be passed, we understand that the following will be one.

"That this meeting of the Liberal Federation confidentially expected that some of its votaries will be appointed Ministers but, though they have been disappointed; they still continue to remain ever loyal and devoted sycophants; and they are sure that the gracious Government will be pleased to reconsider their claims whenever any chances arise."

We understand that there will be the usual resolutions condemning Non-Co-operation and praising Mr. Montagu for his great Reform Act. Worthy ideals for an Association!

* * *

It is very difficult to place any reliance on Reuter's telegrams. We reproduced, last week, a statement by the *Bombay Chronicle* that France and Italy were pressing the revision of the Turkish Treaty and that Lord Curzon was opposing it. The Government of His Majesty has contradicted this statement. On the same day, another telegram said that the possibility of modification of the Turkish Treaty was indicated at a joint meeting of the Financial and Foreign Affairs Committees of the French Chamber at which M. Leygnes is reported to have declared in favour of such a modification so as to make a peace which would not clash with Moslem suscepibilities. Apparently, there is something going on behind the scenes and we hope that ultimately it will be pleasing news.

* * *

The League for the Equality of Races is a high sounding and ambitious project, which will end in nothing. Why do our political leaders forget the oft-repeated truth that unless India gains self-respect in her own country, no free country will care to deal with her as an equal. It may be that some cranks in Japan may be on friendly terms with some cranks here but we know that all this will end in nothing. If India gains Swaraj, she would have achieved that equality. It is not because that we have no sympathy with the object of the League that we criticise it but because we know that it is putting the cart before the horse to form such a League. Every ounce of energy that we can spare must be concentrated on winning Swaraj. All else is waste.

* * *

At last the admission has come from an Englishman, Mr. Curtis, that hundreds of Englishmen in India considered it their duty to insult Indians whenever occasions arise. This is very significant and reveals the strange mentality of our bureaucrats. If an Indian had uttered such sentiments, he would be charged with creating race hatred. Now comes this assertion from an Englishman and an eminent one at that.

* * *

The following sentence from Mr. Lloyd George's speech is brilliant:—"Peace at home and abroad is the foundation of confidence. Confidence is the pillar of credit; credit sustains the fabric of trade; and trade is the sustainer of our people." And again "The business of a Government is to hold the balance evenly, fairly, and justly between Labour and Property, to pursue a middle course. That is the just course, that is the fair course, that is the safe course." Will the Government of Madras take note?

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE NATIONALIST PARTY.

The Nationalist party in this Presidency rose like a rocket and fell like a stone. It has proved to be a body of insincere men who, faced with a crisis, took to their heels and sat comfortably in their homes. There is nothing so discreditable in public life as to talk too much and act too little. Platform eloquence, however brilliant, unaccompanied by any sincere and earnest constructive work, simply repels. To abuse every person in the world as unpatriotic, to sing political twaddles in the spacious sands of the Beach, and then to fly a way at the very hour of sacrifice is not merely cowardly but despicable.

Let us see the facts. The present writer was one of those who protested, in the columns of *New India*, against the formation of a party called the Nationalist party. It was

organized with great flourish of trumpets and several thousands of rupees were put on paper for achieving its object. Not even a bare skeleton of it remains now. And then were let loose on the country the orators who belonged to the Congress party. And what orators these! Well, several of them went about the Presidency lecturing to audiences on the crimes of the Moderates and asking people to return only Nationalists to the Legislative Councils. Be it borne in mind, that talk of this kind was very comfortable as it involved the least personal sacrifice to the lecturers themselves. The air was full of cries and shrieks but lo! at the critical time Mr. Gandhi came forward with his scheme of Non-co-operation. Puffed up with pride, the Nationalists overestimated their own strength and thought that they could easily defeat Mr. Gandhi. But what next?

The Congress party which discredited itself by its very excesses was much strengthened by the entry into it of Mr. S. Srinivasa Ayyangar. And then was formed a sort of united political party. But the restless spirits thirsting for cheap glory cannot be kept under control for long. When the Khilafat Conference met in Madras, some prominent Nationalists, without proper consultation with others, rushed into the Conference and posed as the friends of Islam and as the supporters of the Non-co-operation movement. It was a wretched story of intrigue and fraud which subsequently followed. What took place at the Tinnevelly Conference and after must be within the knowledge of our readers. The only leading and sensible nationalist, Mr. S. Srinivasa Ayyangar had to cut himself off entirely from others owing to the way in which things were being done. At the Special Congress at Calcutta, the Nationalists, who were now called the Congress party, tried their best to get a majority for their views but failed and the Non-Co-operation resolution, as framed by Mr. Gandhi, was passed.

The only resolution about which people concentrated their attention was the boycott of Councils. And what were the Nationalists doing? Either they were for the boycott of the Councils or they were against it. They cannot have been for both. If they were loyal Congressmen, they ought to have firmly advocated the boycott of Councils. If they were against it, they must have used their influence to return the Nationalists to it. They were neither on the side of Mr. Gandhi nor against him. They were hanging in middle air. It is incomprehensible to us how a man who affects to be patriotic can be both for and against the boycott of Councils. That is what the so-called Nationalist leaders have been doing. The result is that they have succeeded in neither. Their party has collapsed and at a most critical time in our history. they are hiding their faces, and are ashamed of their own actions.

And what about the Nationalist Press? We have always understood the function of a newspaper to be twofold. It is both educative and reflective. We are never aware of any time, within our memory, when the *Hindu* was doing the educative function. It has always reflected admirably popular feeling. But, at the present time, it has not even done that. It chides those who ask it to explain its silence by saying that it has, once upon a time, written its views on all subjects. Good Heavens! There is an end of it. There is no use of bothering with the problems as they present themselves every day. Once you state a view, people must remember it and remember till what time? Till another explanation is given. This may be clever journalism but it is not patriotic journalism. A patriot will attempt either to educate the people on the right lines or dissuade them from proceeding on the wrong lines.

What is the future programme? The Nationalist orators have again started their campaign to gather a majority at the Nagpur Congress in order to modify the programme of Non-co-operation. We ourselves desire that some items must be modified. But where were these Nationalists hiding all along? Had these men come forward with their views and lectured to the people earlier, things would have been different. If new taxes are imposed by the Ministry, the oratory of these Nationalists cannot stop them. If any repressive measures are taken against the people, no amount of cynicism can stop them. We understand that the programme of the Nationalist party is to take with them a few hundreds of people to Nagpur and win a majority. To this end, Mr. Das is working in Bengal and some others are working in different Provinces. This is called patriotic work and we are asked to admire these heroes. There is nothing wrong in attempting to get a revision of the programme if there is some honesty about the business. The items of Non-co-operation which were acceptable to the Nationalists were not at all followed till now. This attempt to revise it is only a camoflage to save their faces. We have never expected anything better from a party which relies for its strength on the power of violent abuse of one of its loud-mouthed orators. The party has already collapsed and its further activities will only tend to give it a decent burial.

As we have written in a previous issue, the only possible parties in the future are the Co-operation party and the Non-co-operation party. It is very difficult for any middle party to exist for long though we can understand its possibility. Let us see how things shape themselves at Nagpur.

We have written in this unpolished strain because we feel and we have always felt that the country wants, at the present moment, more honest men than big men, more sincere men than rich men, more self-sacrificing men than mere talking gramaphones. We have written more in sorrow than in anger and we would beg of our readers to make up their minds once for all and not allow a few people, who call themselves leaders, to trade upon their credulity any longer. And we see signs that these cannot carry on their trade with immunity any longer.

MORNING RAIN.

The dew is glistening on the grass.
The sun runs out in streams of gold,

And in my heart the footsteps pass
Of clouds that race and rain-drops mould.

A sudden wind. The welkin breaks
In lightning-flash. Then thunders peal.
The leaves are scattered like snow-flakes,
And trees sway wild in drunken reel.

The earth is drenche'd to the core,
And hung by links of snaky rain,
When hushed becomes the keen wind's roar,
And gracious smiles the sun again

SUN-RISE.

Swim in thy ether blue, O radiant sun!
Breasting the clouds that would thy glory hide,
And flood the world below with light divine.

K. G. Sankara.

INDIAN STATES.

POPULAR MOVEMENTS AND POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP.

BY MR. S. RAMANATHAYER, F. S. SC. (LOND.) M. R. A. S.

IV.

Mr. G. B. Havell, the result of whose close and careful investigation into the history of Aryan rule in India I have quoted in my last, does not stand above in his estimate of the intrinsic character of domocratic institutions in Hindu India. There is quite an increasing number of European scholars who have like him, diverted themselves of the unworthy fashion to depreciate things not belonging to nor born of the West, viewing matters in a just spirit, the great French Saint Hilaise has no hesitation to affirm that " in no country in the whole world has communal autonomy been so developed." It is well known that the late Sir Monier Monier-Williams who was not known to be over-appreciative of Indian institutions characterized "the communal organization of India as self-government in all its purity". On the basis of such and another authorities Mr. John Woodroffe strenuously combats the allowed theory that India did not know what self-government is and proves " how well developed were the relations and functions of the people (Praja-Dharma) towards the king with his councillors and of the king towards the people (Raja Dharma). He deals blows of manly power at the persistent outrage of critics of the type of Mr. Archer and of journalists of the type of Harold Begibi who see nothing but barbarism and a weltering chaos of darkness in India and claims in a spirit of righteous indignation: " Those who say that this country has never known self-government do not themselves know their subject".

Questioning the motives that have prompted such attacks npon Indian unfitness for political autonomy he goes on to say: "India was meditative and yet gave birth to men of action celebrated as warriors and statesman and a people who governed themselves practically and with success." Dealing with Hindu Kings of old he distinctly declares:—" They were not autocrats. Their will was as much subject to general Dharma as were the people. Which the people recognized the King, his duties and functions, the King did the same as regards the people. The Hindu spirit politically displayed itself in a form which was worthy of its other great achievements." With some disinterestedness and knowledge Prof. Lowes-Dickinson regards India as standing for something which distinguishes it from all other peoples and expresses his deliberate opinion that the contract is not so much between East and West as between India and the rest of the world. He avers that one of the greatest services which England has rendered India consists in this that she has not only aroused this country to new life but she has during such process also largely helped to preserve her archaic customs and ancient thought until to-day. He rightly looks upon the social and religious institutions as the body in which the spirit of the ancient islands is conserved.

This is exactly the reason why we find that in the Indo-Aryan constitution the powers of the Central Government though parted with and passed by the people themselves, possess a theocratic character whereas in Europe the state got the better of the church in the several issues between the king and the people, in India the rule of religion became the paramount rule. The principles upon which Indian civilization have a religious basis. Mr. Havell remarks "Religion took the foremost place in the political history of India by a natural psychological process. Political liberty was held to be safe in the keeping of the king and his ministers the Parliament of religions whose functions were to lay down the law of universal life by observing which all men could live sanely and well, became invested with an authority which not even the king could dispute." The priest politicians accordingly brought their culture and diffused it wheneverthey proceeded. Sir Willian Hunter hits the truth when he says: "They became the fathers of the less advanced races" Epigraphical and his torical records there are in abundance to show that different dynasties of kings made grants upon grants of lands to Brahmins. The system of *Nir Attiper* which obtains in the West coast even to-day would give an idea of the nature and extensive scale of such grants. The origin of religious institutions and their relation to sovereign power are thus described by the late talented Maha Raja of Travancore in an article contributed by him to the Calcutta Review:—" Here we would pause a while to examine the origin and nature of these heirarchical rights. According to all legends and all available evidence the Malabar coast was populated by Aryan immigrants from the eastern side of the ghats. It is equally a fact that the priestly class not only predominated among the immigrants but actually monopolized the whole of the land of their adoption to themselves . . . Aggregation and segregations of power, influence and wealth must ever and anon go on under the guidance of the universal law of struggle for existence and survival of the best. Those priests are the wisest and consequently the most powerful who, without directly arrogating secular power to themselves, can bring into the mesties of their moral influence those in whose hands that universal law places such power. The ecclesiastics of the Malabar coast knew this as instinctively as the ecclesiastics of Rome. But they had the additional advantage of having something more solid than benedictions and indulgences to confer upon their political stewards namely, sovereignity of the land which exclusively belonged to them. They were equally wise and far-sighted in another step they took. They foresaw that the halo of sanctity which encircled themselves might not be proof against the gradual degeneracy of religious feelings which time must produce and the consequent encroachment of their supremacy

in the land. And they constitutionalized that sanctity by demising large tracts of lands and their revenues to certain temples built and consecrated by them. Of these temples the priests assumed the proprietory wardenship. Almost temple of note had a synod of these priestly wardens. They invited the leading layman or chief to a membership of the synod and entrusted to him the stewardship of the whole temple domain-subject to their superior authority. Thus arose those rich temples, thus arose the sovereignties of the Malabar Coast" such being the case, *Kshitra Sambandham* or affinity to temples became a merit of the highest order and in the scramble for it, the chiefs were unmindful of even the geographical situation of places or territorial jurisdiction of the temples. The Rajas of Calicut and Palghat acquired power over temples in the Cochin territory; the Rajas of Paur and Porakad in Travancore, over temples of Perumanum and Kudulmambam, in Cochin; the Raja of Cochin over temples of Thirumalai and Haripad in Travancore. The Raja of Cochin added the little of *Tiroovil Adhikrarigal* to his full official designation, while his neighbour, the Travancore Raja went a step further. Inspired by the time spirit of the age, Maha Raja Mastanda Varma who by his conquests extended Travancore to its present limits reached the climes of the sacertal sentiment by dedicating the whole state to his family deity and called himself Vadwanabha Dasa—a title borne by the ruler down to the present day. The King became the Head of the church and the Head of the State. Even to-day the chief temple of Sri Vadwambha is under the management of a Committee known as *Ettarayogum* (an assembly of 8½) composed of eight Brahmin landlords with one vote each and the Maha Raja who has but ½ a vote. The Cabinet of the oldest time was designated *Sri Mandasa Karayam Cheyvaskal* or those who perform the divine function of administration. The voting offices were held in temple *Mantapams* from which circumstance they came to be named *Muntapathu Vathukal*—a name remained even now. In Cochin *Kovilamathu Vathukal* corresponds to this.

The hereditary monarch was the Head of the Government but his powers were restricted by five Councils. The territorial divisions were not by towns but the number of citizens; such as the 500 of Kodabaranad, to 400 of Annamanad, the 300 of Cenguzinad and so forth. Sir Thomas Munro gives a graphic description :—" All lands except those set apart for religious purposes were held on military tenure, every little sub-division of territory instead of being called lands and servants.

(3) Desam or Control of the marriages and all village ceremonies, none of which could be performed without his leave.

(4) Desathipathi or the General Superintendent of all offences of the desam or village.

When the head of the village possessed all these rights he was the Desavazhi; when he wanted the Ambalapathi and urayma but had the other two he was the *Janmi* of the village; these rights where they existed could not be separated. The directions of the civil, religious and military affairs of the village were always vested in the same person. The Desavazhi was the Military Chief of the village and marched at the head of its quota to the field and he had the direction a district of so many thousand pagodas being called one of so many thousand men. The Districts were divided into villages under hereditary chiefs whose duties, making allowance for the military nature of the Government did not essentially differ from those of the Dist. village officials of other countries. The head man of the desam was called *Desa vezhi* or the *Janmi* according as he enjoyed the whole or a part of rights which were supposed as necessary to constituting the complete chief of the Desam. These rights were as follows :—(1) The Ambulathipathi or the direction of the village ceremonies of the pagodas; (2) The urayma or management of the pagoda of the police and the power of deciding petty law suits. In police and judicial matters he was aided by 2 or 3 respectable. *Pramanis.* These were usually from one to five or six Pramanis to a villager all of the superior, castes of Numbudries Nayars, Tiyyes Chetti and Mapillas." The function of the *kultum* of the Nadar National Assembly was to effectively curb the power of the King whose powers, notwithstanding has great authority were limited. According to Duasti Barbora when a new King is crowned all the grander and former Governors made him swear to maintain the old laws and constitution. Van Rheed, the Dutch Governor has recorded in his Hartus Malabaricus that subjects were not bound to observe any orders or commands or whims and Council decisions of the King which are at variance with their laws, prosperity or privileges and which they have approved of in their own territories and accepted at their political meetings. Logun, too quotes the authority of the East Indian Company in his Malabar Manual:—"These Nayars being heads of Calicut people, resemmble the parliament and do not obey the King's dictates in all things but chastise his ministers when they do unwarrantable acts. The 2 Illustrations from Travancore history given in my first article are typical of the popular movements in keeping with the public spirit of those far-off days.

MADAME BLAVATSKI.

Several members or my mother's family were prominent in one way or another. One of my aunts, who married a Colonel Hahn, achieved some fame as a writer. Her elder daughter was the celebrated theosophist known under the name of Madame Blavatski. The personality and career of my cousin Helene Petrovna Blavatski deserves to be treated at some length. As I was many years her junior, I could not have any recollections of Helena in her youth. From stories current in our family I gather that when Mrs. Hahn, her mother, died, she and her sister came to live with my grandfather at Taflis. At an early age, such is the family tradition, Helena married a certain Blavatski, Vice-Governor of the Province of Erival, and settled in the city of the same name, but soon abandoned her husband and came back to her grandfather. When she appeared in his spacious mansion he immediately decided to send away the troublesome young person at the earliest possible moment to her father, who was an Artillery Colonel stationed in the vicinity of St. Petersburg. As there were at that time no railways within the territory of the Caucasus, the problem was

not without its difficulties. It was solved in this wise. Two women and as many men, including grandfather's trusty steward selected from the large staff of domestic serfs, and under this convoy the future theosophic celebrity proceeded in the direction of Poti, enthroned in a capacious four-in-hand. From Poti it was planned to ship the fugitive by sea to some port connected by rail with the interior of Russia. When the company arrived in Poti, several steamers, including an English craft, lay in the harbour. Young Mme. Blavatski, so the story runs, immediately struck up an acquaintance with the captain of the English vessel. To make a long story short, one fine morning the convoy discovered to their horror that their mistress and charge had vanished into the air. Stowed away in an English ship she was on her way to Constantinople.

A LADY'S ESCAPADE.

The subsequent developments of her amazing career appear as follows: At Constantinople she entered a circus as an equestrain, and it was there that Mitrovich, one of the most celebrated opera basses of the time, fell in love with her. She gave up the circus, and accompanied the singer to one of the European capitals where he was engaged to sing. Shortly afterwards grandfather was the recipient of letters from the singer Mitrovich, who asserted that he had been married to Helena, and styled himself "grandson." The famous busso apparently was not disconcerted by the fact that she had not been properly divorced from her legal husband, the Vice-Governor of Erivan. Several years later a new "grandson" accrued to my grandparents. A certain Englishman from London informed them in a letter bearing an American stamp that he had been married to Mme. Blavatski, who had gone with him on a business trip to the United States. Next she reappears in Europe, and becomes the right hand of the celebrated medium of the "sixties," Hume. Then her family caught two more glimpses of her dazzling career. They learned from the papers that she gave pianoforte concerts in London and Paris, and afterwards became the manager of the royal choir maintained by King Milan of Serbia. In the meantime some ten years had passed. Grown tired, perhaps, of her adventures, the strayed sheep decided to return to the fold. She succeeded, at the end of that period in getting grandfather's permission to teturn to Tiflis. She promised to mend her ways, and even go back to her legitimate husband. It was during that visit of hers that I saw her first. At that time she was but a ruin of her former self. Her face, apparently once of great beauty, bore all the traces of a tempestuous and passionate life, and her form was marred by an early obesity. Besides, she paid but scant attention to her appearance, and preferred loose morning dress to more elaborate apparel. But her eyes were extraordinary. She had enormous, azure-coloured eyes, and and when she spoke with animation they sparkled in a fashion which is altogether indescribable. Never in my life have I seen anything like that pair of eyes.

It was this apparently unattractive woman that turned the heads of a great many society people at Tiflis. She did it by means or spiritualistic seances, which she conducted in in our house. Every evening, I remember. the Tiflis society folk would foregather in our house around Helena Petrovna. Among the guests were Count Vorontzov-Dashkov, the two Counts Orlov-Davydov, and other representatives of the jeunessedoree, which at that time was flocking to the Caucasus from the two capitals in quest of pleasure and adventure. The seance would last the whole evening, and often times the whole night. My cousin did not confine the demonstrations of her powers to table-rapping, evocation of spirits, and similar mediumistic hocuspocus. On one occasion she caused a closed piano in an adjacent room to emit sounds as if invisible hands were playing upon it. This was done in my presence, at the instance of one of the guests. Although a young boy, my attitude toward these performances was decidedly critical, and I looked on them as mere sleight-of-hand tricks. I should like to add that these seances were kept secret from my grandparents, and that my father, too, entertained a negative attitude towards the whole business. It was Hume, I believe to whom Madame Balavatski owed her occult knowledge. Madame Blavatski made her peace with her husband, and went as far as establishing a home at Tiflis, but it was not given to her to walk the path of righteousness for any length of time. One fine morning she was accosted in the street by Mitrovich. The famous basso was now declining, artistically and otherwise. After a brilliant career in Europe he was forced to accept an engagement at the Italian Opera of Tiflis. The singer apparently had no doubts as to his rights to my cousin, and did not hesitate to assent his claims. As a result of the scandal, Madame Blavatski vanished from Tiflis, and the basso with her. The couple went to Kiev, where, under the guidance of his "wife," Mitrovich, who by this time was approaching 60, learned how to sing in Russian, and appeared with success in such Russian operas as "Life for the Tsar," "Rusalka," etc. The office of Governor-General of Kiev was held at that time by Prince Dundukov-Korsakoy. The Prince, who at one time served in the Caucasus, had known Helena Petrovna in her maiden days. I am not in a position to say what was the nature of their relationship, but one fine morning the Kievans discovered a leaflet pasted on the doors and telegraph posts which contained a number of poems very disagreeable for the Governor-General. The author of this poetic outburst was no other person than Madame Blavatski herself, and as the fact was patent the couple had to clear out.

MANY ADVENTURES.

She was next heard of from Odessa where she emerged in the company of the faithful basso. At the time our entire family was settled in that city (my grandparents and father had died at Tiflis), and my brother and I attended the university there. The extraordinary couple must have found themselves in great straits. It was then that my versatile cousin opened in succession an ink factory and retail shop and an artificial flower store. In those days she often came to see my mother, and I visited her store several times, so that I had the opportunity of getting acquainted with her. I was especially impressed by the extraordinary fecility with which she acquired skill and knowledge of the most varied description. Her abilities in this respect verged on the uncanny. A self taught musician, she was able to give pianoforte concert, in London and Paris, and although entirely ignorant of the theory of music, she conducted a large orchestra. Consider also that, although she never seriously studied any foreign languages, she spoke several of them with perfect ease. I was also struck by her mastery of the technique of verse. She could write pages of smoothly-flowing verse without the slightest effort, and she could compose essays in prose on every conceivable subject. Besides, she possessed the gift of hypnotising both her hearer and herself into believing the wildest inventions of her fantasy. She had no doubt, a literary talent. The Moscow editor, Katkav, famous in the annals of Russian journalism, spoke to me in the highest terms of praise about her literary gift, as evidenced in the tales entitled "From the Jungles of Hindustan." which she contributed to his mgazine, "The Russian Messenger (Russki Vyestnik)." Mme. Blavatski's ventures in the field of commerce and industry proved, of course, dismal failures. It was then that Mitrovich accepted an engagement to sing at the Italian Opera at Caire and the couple set out for Egypt. By that time they presented a rather sorry sight, he a toothless lion, perennially at the feet of his mistress, an aged lady stout and slovenly. Off the African coast their ship was wrecked, and all the passengers found themselves in the waves. Mitrovich saved his mistress, but was drowned himself. Mme. Blavatski entered Cairo in a wet skirt and without a penny to her name. How she "extricated herself from that situation I do not know, but she was next discovered in England, where she founded a Theosophic Society. To strengthen the foundations of the new cult, she travelled to India, where she studied the occult science of the Hindus. Upon her

return from India she became the centre of a large group of devotees of the theosophic doctrine, and settled in Paris as the acknowledged head of the theosophists Shortly afterwards she feel ill and died. The teachings of theosophy, however, arestill thriving. Let him who still doubts the non-material origin and the independent existence of the soul in man consider the personality of Mme. Blavatski. During near earthly existence she housed a spirit which was no doubt, independent of phiysical or physiological being. As to the particular realm of the invisible world from which that spirit emerged, there may be some doubt whether it was Inferno, Purgatory or Paradise. I cannot help feeling that there was something demoniac in that extraordinary woman.—Count write in the *Daily Telegraph*.

NOTES.

As we go to Press, we receive news confirming our anticipations. There are to be four members to the Excutive Council and three ministers. The names of Ministers are

(1) *Dewan Bahadur A. Subbarayalu Reddiar*
(2) *Dewan Bahadur P. Ramaraiyangar*
(3) *Rai Bahadur K. Venkata Reddi.*

These gentlemen have been selected on the principle which we have controverted elsewhere in this issue. If Mr. C. P. Ramasamiayer is to retain his seat in the Council, Madras City will, strangely enough, be represented by an official. We do not think that Mr. Ramasamiayer's acceptance of the office of Advocate-General, after so much gas about him, has made either his party or even *New India* proud of him. The popular *suspicion* that he was an office-hunter has been confirmed.

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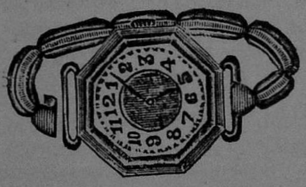

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